

# THE WANADA BULLETIN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT FRANCHISED NEW CAR DEALERS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

WANADA Bulletin # 40-08

October 10, 2008

## DEALERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### WANADA Nominates Dennis Rippeon for 2009 TMQDA



For his success in business, innumerable contributions to his industry and community, Dennis Rippeon, vice president and chief operating officer (COO) of Ourisman Automotive has been nominated by WANADA for the **2009 TIME Magazine Quality Dealer Award (TMQDA)**. As the official submitting the nomination, Gerard Murphy, president of WANADA, described the association's candidate as "one of the most forward thinking, organized dealers around." Among other things, Mr. Rippeon served on WANADA's

Board of Directors for 14 years, culminating in his service as WANADA Chairman in 2004-2005.

The high industry honor will be awarded to Dennis Rippeon and other dealers from across the U.S. at the 2009 NADA Convention in New Orleans on January 24.

Not out of a family in the automobile business *per se*, Mr. Rippeon, nonetheless, grew up with gasoline in his veins. His dad, Orman Rippeon, owned and operated a gas station in Damascus, Maryland, where young Dennis worked from the time he was 12. After graduat-

ing from the University of Maryland in 1969 with a degree in economics and accounting, Mr. Rippeon leveraged his training to secure his first dealership job in the business office at Big Henry Ford in Gaithersburg, Maryland. As fate would have it, Big Henry (Woodfield) recognized that his recent hire would be better engaged in car sales, which soon enough transitioned Mr. Rippeon into the sales manager's position.

From there, Mr. Rippeon went to Chevy Chase Chevrolet in Bethesda, Maryland where he ultimately became general

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### "An Infusion of Confidence Can Solve a Lot of Our Worries," says Tamara Darvish

Commenting on the credit crisis and its impact on auto sales, Tamara Darvish of DARCARS observed that "customers are holding on to their money in part because of what they're seeing in the newspaper and on television," The Washington Post reported in an October 7 article entitled "A Nightmare for Sales of Dream Cars."

"It's scaring the heck out of people," she told The Post. "I think an infusion of confidence can solve a lot of our worries and our problems right now."

Ethan Rossignol, a sales representative with the DARCARS Group, noted that savvy car buyers know that now is a good time to strike a deal and take advantage of incentives. The market hasn't crashed by any means, he said, but recent weeks have been

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## DEALERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**Rippeon**

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manager. He worked in that capacity at King Automotive for a time as well.

In 1991, WANADA's TMQDA candidate joined Ourisman Automotive at its Rockmont Chevrolet store where he signed on as vice president and COO. Currently, Dennis Rippeon and his business partner, Robert Ourisman, are together in six Ourisman stores, including Rockmont, in and around the Capital Beltway.

As a WANADA leader, Mr. Rippeon was instrumental in WANADA's establishment of the Auto Dealer Education Institute and the mission of the Washington Auto Show to become the public policy show on the industry's global circuit. With automaker franchisor partners, Mr. Rippeon was asked to join General Motor's Chevrolet Dealer Advisory Board, a post he held from 1996 to 2006. He currently serves on the regional dealer advertising association boards for Chevrolet and Chrysler.

With the Washington Auto Show (WAS), he chaired the Charity Preview & Gala in 2008, which raised significant funds for a variety of important health advocacy and children's organizations. And in his capacity as an officer of the Washington Area Chevrolet Dealers Advertising Association, Mr. Rippeon established and spearheaded a vehicle prize contest cosponsored by The Auto Show and the DC Lottery that has run successfully for the past two years.

He also served as chairman of the organizing committee for the MADA/WANADA Finance &

Insurance Certification Program, and has chaired WANADA's Maryland Dealer Political Action Committee since 2003.

In the community, Mr. Rippeon was the longstanding chairman of the Zoning Committee of the Darnestown (MD) Civic Association, where he is remembered for effectively balancing the character of an historic locality with the dynamics of an expanding metropolitan region.

"Being nominated for the TMQDA is a great honor, not just for me but the for the entire

Ourisman organization, which I'm proud to represent," said Mr. Rippeon. "I realized early on how exciting the automobile business is, and the opportunity to become a dealer principal was the key motivator that has driven my career path," he said.

"Nobody works harder than Dennis, or is more successful at getting things done," observed Gerry Murphy of WANADA's TMQDA selection. "He is well deserving of this industry recognition and has his association's best wishes."

**MEDIA FRENZY ON TIGHT CREDIT**

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challenging.

"People who might have been looking for a loaded, leathered-up, navigation (system equipped) \$32,000 Camry (are) more inclined to buy a \$22,000 Camry with cloth interiors," he said.

Robert Bassam, CEO of Easterns Automotive, told The Post he could feel the "negativity" in the air as he marked his 20th year in the automobile business.

Mr. Bassam pointed out that in better times he could arrange a loan for someone with marginal credit. That's not possible now, he said, no matter how much all parties want to close the sale. Even customers with good credit, in the "prime-risk" category, can get turned down by lenders. "There's a stranglehold on people's lives, and it's through the loans," he said.

**Car Loan Delinquencies are Up**

Auto-loan delinquencies are on the rise as cash-strapped consumers increasingly struggle to stay current, The Wall Street Journal reports. Nearly \$25 billion in auto loans are past due, according to a report by Experian Automotive from the Auto Finance Summit meeting in Las Vegas. Auto lenders saw a 9 percent rise in loans 30 days past due in the second quarter of 2008 from a year earlier, and an 11 percent increase in loans 60 days past due. WSJ reports that about 57 percent of borrowers with open loans have what is considered a prime credit rating, down from 61 percent two years ago. "There is a pretty big dollar burden out there in terms of delinquencies," said Melinda Zabritski of Experian. All in all, there were about 64 million auto loans, worth \$795 billion, on the books in the second quarter of 2008.

## 2008 MONDIAL DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## WAS Delegates Meet OEMs &amp; Others in Paris to Promote "Public Policy Show"

The recently concluded industry days at the Paris Auto Show were the gathering place for top automobile executives from across the world. As such, it represented a special opportunity for the delegation from The Washington Auto Show (WAS) that went there last week to meet with industry operatives to present Washington as *the public policy show venue* on the industry circuit – a reality dramatically underscored by recent global events showing the interconnectedness of international business.

"Interfacing with OEM executives at major industry events like the Paris Auto Show is consistent with our mission to present Washington as a top tier, world class auto show venue," said WAS Chairman John Ourisman. "Washington is home to the U.S. Congress and the federal establishment, which makes what goes on there pivotal to the design of new vehicles," he said. "This couldn't be any more clear with the tangible action of the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE International) to co-locate their Industry/Government Conference with The Washington Auto Show, which will happen in February." In all, WAS representatives met with numerous OEMs and industry observers, to include, of the latter variety, the president of the Paris Auto Show and Keith Crain of Automotive News.

Besides Mr. Ourisman, WAS leaders in the delegation were Tamara Darvish and George Doetsch, WANADA chairman and vice chairman, respectively. SAE supported the WAS delegation also, represented by Tim Mellon and Nancy Lewis, directors of government relations and communications, respectively. And as part of the city's ongoing support of the WAS as an international destination, DC Council Chairman Vincent Gray and Deputy Mayor (city administrator) Dan Tangherlini were both on hand, who in turn were supported by key staff from Destination DC, the convention and tourism corporation. Besides actively participating in the industry meetings with the delegates, city officials met with their French counterparts to discuss such urban challenges as transportation and economic development.

As stakeholders in the U.S. public policy process, NADA Chairman Annette Sykora and NADA President Phil Brady were especially helpful to the WAS delegation in its work at the *Mondial de l'Automobile*, as was Gloria Bergquist with the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers.



WANADA Chairman Tamara Darvish with NADA Chairman Annette Sykora at the *Mondial de l'Automobile*.



From left: Vincent Gray, chairman, DC Council; Steve Keyes, director of communication, Volkswagen of America; John Ourisman, WAS chairman, and Tim Mellon, SAE.



From left: NADA President Phil Brady, WANADA Vice Chairman George Doetsch, Ford CEO Alan Mulally, and NADA Chairman Annette Sykora.



WAS delegates hosted by the Ambassador to the U.S. Organization for Economic Coordination and Development in Paris. From left: Vincent Gray, chairman DC City Council; Christopher Egan, U.S. Ambassador to the OECD; Dan Tangherlini, DC Deputy Mayor; Elliott Ferguson, Destination DC; and Gerard Murphy, WANADA.



**REGISTER TODAY!****WANADA Annual Meeting & Luncheon***Monday, November 17, 2008***Marriott Wardman Park Hotel****Featuring Political, Business, and Financial Expert Barry Asmus  
Speaking About *The New World Order***

Washington Area new auto dealer principals, key managers, and business associates will not want to miss WANADA's 2008 Annual Meeting and Luncheon. Our featured keynote speaker is Dr. Barry Asmus, a noted writer and political, business and financial authority who was named by *USA Today* as one of the five most requested speakers in America. Expect an enthusiastic and energy filled presentation hot on the heels of the 2008 election season (and, hopefully, the credit crisis).

Mark you calendars right now for lunch with your fellow dealers in the WANADA membership on Nov. 17, and be ready to gain a better understanding of where the U.S. and the world are heading economically and politically in these uncertain times. Hear, too, what your WANADA organization has been about, while networking with dealer peers, business supporters and friends at this great once-a-year dealer group gathering.

Tickets for the WANADA Annual Meeting and Luncheon are \$125 per person, with a table of ten discounted to \$1,150. For more information and registration see the enclosed form, or register online at [www.wanada.org](http://www.wanada.org). Questions can be directed to Kristina Henry at [kh@wanada.org](mailto:kh@wanada.org).

**Membership Directory Data Changes***Please Respond By October 31*

WANADA thanks all the members who responded to our request to update their information for our Membership Directory, and we urge *those who have not responded* with their updated information to please do so. All responses received prior to October 31, 2008 will be included in the new directory.

The following dealer member information will be included in the directory: Company Name, Address, Telephone Number, E-mail Address, Fax Number, Website, Usual Representative, Associate Representative (additional \$60 per year), Product Line(s) Sold (for dealer members), and Membership Activity (for Kindred-Line members).

Responses for the Membership Directory should be sent to Bill Belew at WANADA, via fax, (202) 237-9090, or email, [bb@wanada.org](mailto:bb@wanada.org).

**Thought for the Week...**

*Five years from now, 10 years from now, we'll look back at this period and we'll say you could have made some extraordinary buys. The American economy over a period of time will do very well, and people that own a piece of it will do very well.*

---Warren Buffett

**Enclosure/**

*WANADA Annual Meeting & Membership Luncheon, Nov. 17, 2008 Registration Form*